

Calendar of Óðinn

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Summary

Óðinn is 'the god of the sky' or 'the god of everything'. Snorri Sturluson named him 'the father of all' ('Allföðr' or 'Alföðr'. See: [Gylfaginning ch 3](#)). He has one burning eye: the sun. His solar horse is named [Sleipnir](#) and it has eight legs. Why does Sleipnir have eight legs? I believe that his legs represent the eight months of the solar year. The Germanic peoples divided the [compass rose](#) in eight parts. And they divided the solar year in eight months of one and a half moon.

A Synodic moon has 29.5 days. 12 moons in a year add up to 354 days, while a year has 365.24 days. So at the end of the year they added a half moon. This time was called 'Between the years' or Yule.

12.5 Moons in a year add up to 368 to 369 days. So after a while the calendar needed to be reset. That was done once in every nine years. In Uppsala (Sweden) there was a great feast once in every nine years, to reset the calendar. See: [The temple at old Uppsala](#). For Denmark, Thietmar of Merseburg mentions a similar [festival in Lejre](#). During that time one month was trimmed to a moon or a half moon according to their needs.

When a year has 12.5 moons, it means that if one new year starts with full moon, the next starts with new moon. So one year starts with full moon and favors outward behavior, and the next year starts with new moon and favors inward behavior and starting new things.

'Calendar of Óðinn' is a name I have given this type of calendar. Probably the old Germanic peoples used more than one calendar for different purposes. But names of calendars are not written down.

Calendar formats:

The calendar of modern society is fairly simple and is the same everywhere (in the western world). It is based on the movement of the earth around its axis (the day) and the movement of the earth around the sun (the year). The movement of the moon around the earth is not taken into account. And this format is the same everywhere.

It was very different with the old Germanic peoples. Different year divisions were used, some of which were mixed up. Time could be calculated differently from region to region. But in any case, the real orbit of the earth around the sun was adhered to. Winter started with the first winter month.

The ancient Romans adhered to a year of 365.25 days: [the Julian calendar](#). This was introduced by Julius Caesar in 44 BC. So the Roman year was 0.01 day too long. Over a long period of time, this resulted in major differences. Winter no longer started with the winter month. In 1582 it was replaced by the [Gregorian calendar](#).

The earth revolves around the sun in 365.242 days. Most years we give 365 days. Once every four years we have a 'leap year' with 366 days. Once in a century we skip a leap year. So in 1900 we didn't have a leap year. But once every thousand years, we DO NOT skip the leap year. In the year 2000 we therefore had a leap year and in the year 2100 we do not.

Importance of right calculation of time

Farmers need to know when to sow. If you put seeds in the ground at the wrong time, you will not have a good harvest. Fishermen need to know when to arrive at the fishing grounds. Roman emperors could deviate the calendar from the real physical time, because they did not have to grow food or catch fish. For farmers and fishermen the Julian reckoning was useless. We should assume, that they had a second more practical calculation of time. And we should assume this for the old Germanic peoples also. These peoples must have used a calendar adapted to their environment. This was vastly different for tribes in Middle Europe and for tribes in Northern Europe.

13 months in a year:

In various Germanic and Celtic areas they worked with 13 months of 28 days. Then they arrived at 364 days. Once every 19 years this had to be compensated with a year of 14 months. The advantage of this division is the week: Each month consisted of 4 weeks of 7 days. That's where our weekly schedule comes from.

See '2. The thirteen-month year' in [Skyllore of the North](#) of Otto Sigfrid Reuter.

In the Edda song [Sigdrífumál](#) Sígdrífa is the 14th [Valkyrja](#). Óðinn usually has [13 valkyrjas](#). (The valkyrjas are winds. Each valkyrja is a separate wind. By touching warriors with a wind, Óðinn chooses those who would fall on the battlefield. They are represented as fiery shield maidens riding horses through the air.) Sígdrífa is the 14th. She is the sleeping valkyrja. According to the [Sigdrífumál](#), Óðinn stabbed her with a sleeping thorn. (Perhaps this is where the Sleeping Beauty fairy tale comes from.) She is awakened once every 19 years to complete a 14-month year. Sígdrífa is usually translated as "driver to victory" or something like that. But [síga drífa](#) can be translated as "floating away like a flake of snow". When Sígdrífa touches you, you drift away like a snowflake in the wind and that is an easy death.

Yearly divisions with the moon:

Sun and moon have a major influence on all living things. All animals and plants in the ocean are strongly focused on the moon. The animals and plants on the mainland are also influenced by the moon. The sun determines the seasons, but the moon accurately determines the processes on Earth to the day. Certain things only happen at full moon or after a set number of days after full moon. Other things only happen at new moon or after a set number of days after new moon. Moon and sun determine the life rhythms of all plants and animals. So also in humans.

Our western calendar does not take the moon into account. That is why we are in disharmony with nature. We simply celebrate New Year's Eve on the night of December 31. Who cares where the moon is? We celebrate Christmas on December 25th. What does it matter where the moon is? We only celebrate Easter on Sunday and Monday after the first FULL MOON after the onset of spring. This reminds of the great initiation and fertility festival of the old Germanic peoples. Christians would like us to believe that Easter is a Christian holiday. But Jewish Easter is celebrated at a different time. And which believers like to celebrate the crucifixion of their messiah? And why do we give Easter eggs to celebrate Christ's crucifixion? Easter eggs are a fertility symbol. They have nothing to do with Christianity.

The moon orbits the Earth in an average of 27.3217 days. This period is not constant. Depending on the season, the moon can orbit the Earth a little faster or a little slower. In these 27.3 days the earth has moved relative to the sun. The moon then needs another 2.2 days to bridge this gap. Therefore, there are an average of 29.5306 days between two full moons. The division in months is based on this time. This time has been rounded to 30 days. Most months have 30 days.

For the difference between the Sidereal moon of 27.3 days and the Synodic moon of 29.5 days see: [Lunar Sidereal and Synodic Periods](#) or search with 'synodic sidereal moon'.

If you want to take moon and sun into account, you can start a year with the first full moon (or new moon) after the start of winter (December 22 or 23). And you make a month last one moon. One month has 30 days, the next 29 days. After 12 moons you are then 354 days further. You will then be $11\frac{1}{4}$ days short per year. Or if you calculate it accurately: 10.8748 days short. This must be compensated. There are various methods to do so.

Reuter writes: "Since the islanders' livelihood depended on starting the fishing season at the right time (because the fish migrations begin regularly at the same time every year), they could not use the old form of lunar year that they had brought with them. The required insertion of a whole month every two or three years carried with it the danger of missing the shoals of fish in the main fishing month. Instead of a whole month, they therefore inserted half a month, thus beginning one year at new moon and the next at full moon." ('4. The old Faroese lunar year' in [Skylore of the North](#) of Otto Sigfrid Reuter.)

The year with 8 months:

Óðinn is the god of the sky and the wind. His one burning eye is the sun. (See [Óðinn as Anima Solaris](#)) He rides [Sleipnir](#) (the smooth moving one, the sliding one), a horse with eight legs. These eight legs represent the eight months of the solar year. Between the end of the eight month and the beginning of the new year there was a period of a half moon. In Germany this time was called 'Zwischen den Jahren' (between the years). Other names were: 'die Zwölften' (the twelve), 'Unternächte' (under nights) and '[Rauhnächte](#)'. See [Raunacht](#). In English this time is usually called [Yule](#) and [Twelfth night](#). Iceland remembers a [13th Night](#).

Farwerck, a Dutch free mason who studied the old European mythology, writes in 'Noordeuropese mysteriën en hun sporen tot heden', pag 104:

daartussen liggende tijd was de Jul-tijd en zou dan terecht “tussen de jaren” geheten hebben. De jaarindeling in dertien maanden is nog lang in gebruik gebleven tot zelfs in de historische tijd. Zo zijn er dan ook allerlei herinneringen aan overgebleven. Het ongeluksgetal 13 (de dertiende maand, de laatste, de maand van de dood, de ongeluksmaand) heeft er zijn oorsprong vermoedelijk aan te danken.

In de streek van Siegen heetten de twaalf de “heilige dagen”, wat misschien daarmee samenhangt, dat keizer Karel de decembermaand, die vroeger Wolfsmaand heette, veranderde in “Heiligmanôth”¹¹⁷). Ook de synode van Tours van 567 spreekt reeds van de “heilige twaalf dagen-tijd”¹¹⁸). Men heeft daarom getracht, de twaalf nachten af te leiden van de christelijke dodekahemeron, die reeds door de Syriër Ephraïm in de 4e eeuw genoemd wordt. Op die grond zou de synode van Tours deze dagen tot een christelijke feesttijd verheven hebben. Er bestaan echter goede gronden, om dit feest als geïnspireerd door het heidense Jul-feest te beschouwen. Reeds de onregelmatige bepaling der twaalf nachten in het volksgebruik wijst hier op.¹¹⁹), want als de feestdagen een kerkelijke oorsprong hadden, dan zou er wel een uniforme regeling gekomen zijn. Er zijn echter nog andere aanwijzingen, dat de twaalf nachten in verband gebracht moeten worden met de oude heidense tijdrekening. Op een runenstafkalender uit 1784, een Oudgermaanse boerenkalender, waarop de dagen der week met runetekens worden aangegeven, komt op de dagen van Kerstmis tot Driekonigen een aantal drinkhoorns voor, wat dus duiden kan op de oude cultische drinkgelagen, die eertijds op die dagen plaats vonden. De dag van Driekonigen heeft daarbij een omgekeerde drinkhoorn, wat kennelijk wijst op het einde van het feest¹²⁰) (afb. 29 en 30).



29.

Houten stafkalender
(december)



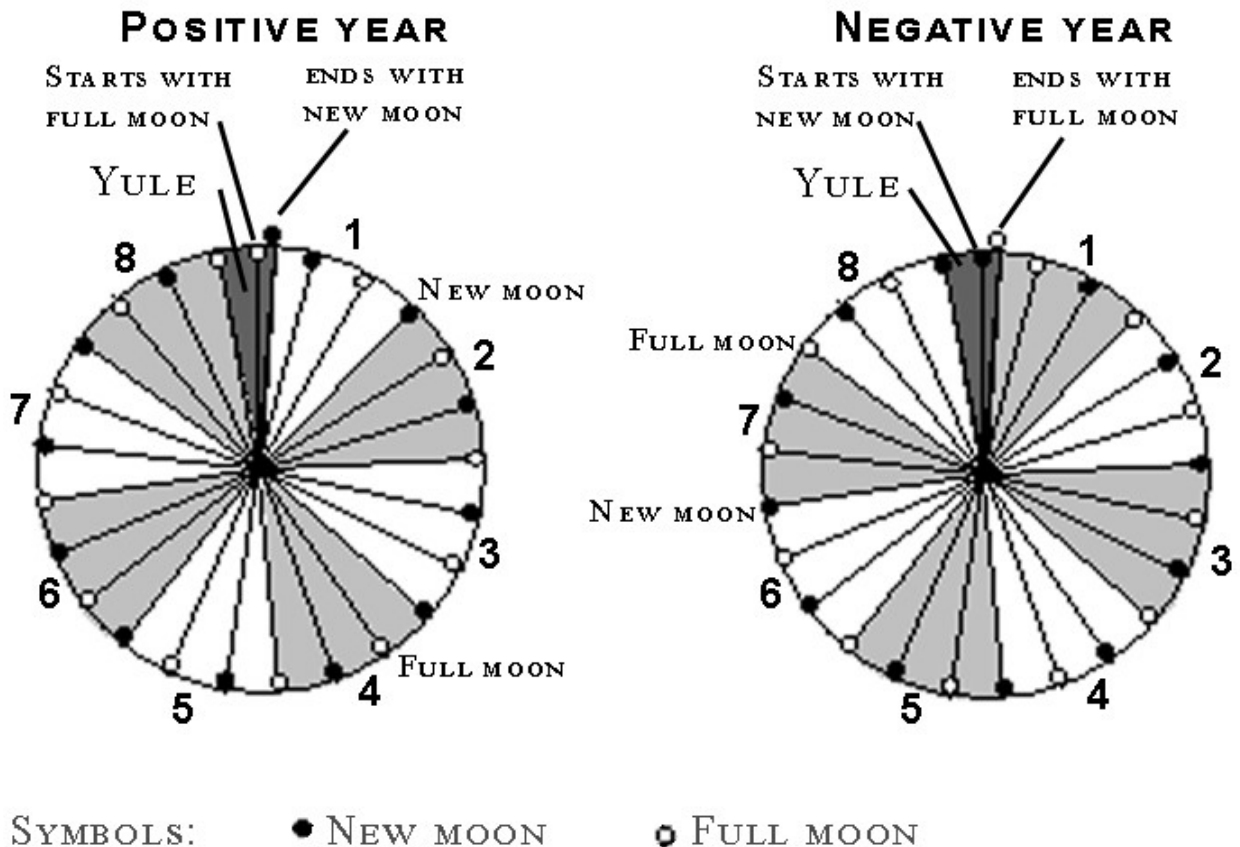
30.

Houten stafkalender
(januari)

The calendar of Óðinn

Note: I gave this calendar the name 'calendar of Óðinn'. Giving it a name makes it easier to communicate about it. I am not aware of any writings, that use this name for this calendar.

The calendar of Óðinn takes into account the orbit of the moon. Each month lasts 1.5 moons. If the first month begins with a full moon, the second begins with a new moon. And vice-versa. When the first month begins with a full moon, the year is positive, masculine, and outward. If the first month begins with the new moon, the year is negative, feminine and inward-looking.



The positive year starts with the full moon (the light circles). The even months of a positive year (2, 4, 6, 8) start with a new moon (the black circles). The negative year starts with the new moon (the black circles). The even months of a negative year (2, 4, 6, 8) start with a full moon (the light circles). Yule lasts a half moon. Because of this half moon, one year starts with a full moon and the following year with a new moon. If a month starts with a full moon, it is masculine, a month to complete things. A month starting with a new moon is feminine, a month to start new things.

The period between two full moons is about 29.53 days. If a month lasts one and a half moon, a month would be 44.3 days. Most months would be rounded down to 44 days, some months would be rounded up to 45 days. A year of 8 months of one and a half moon lasts about 354.36 days. When we add a half moon for the yule-time or 'time between the years' we get a year of 369.13 days. A year lasts about 365.24 days. So each year would be 3.89 days to long. In nine years the difference adds up to 34.97 days. When you take a moon out of a month of the ninth year, the difference is about 5.44 days. When you take another half moon out of a month of the 27th year, the difference is about 1.56 days **in 27 years**.

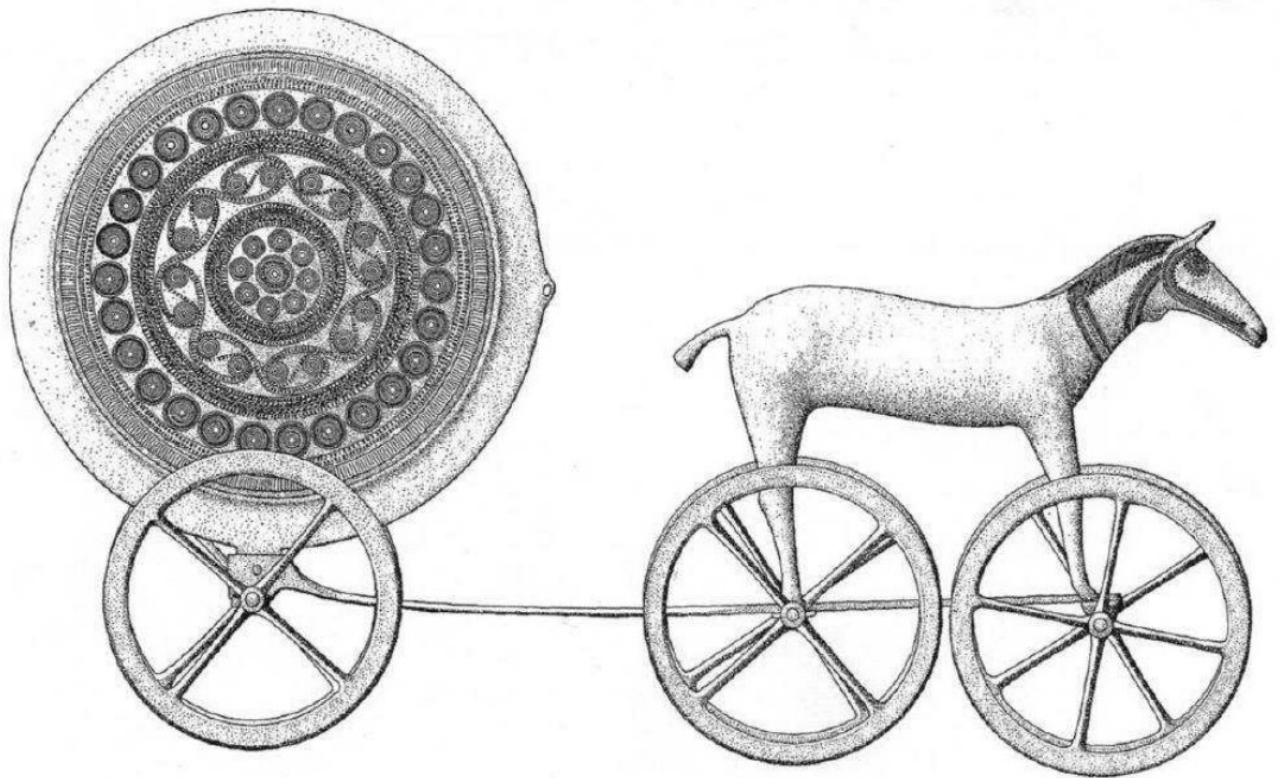
Jan de Vries writes in [Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte](#) alinea 255:

We have far less evidence of a moon cult. Some researchers claim that the worship of the moon is older than that of the sun because the apparent phases were far more likely to attract attention than the unchanging daytime star. It has been found that in several Indo-European peoples the lunar year was older than the solar one and that the Twelve Nights at the end of the year, which were considered a special festival time, were precisely the balance between the two types of year. This has to do with the fact that the lunar month must originally have been of much greater importance for the cultic celebrations; That's why the new moon also determined the beginning of sacrificial festivals, gatherings of things, etc. The fact that the moon actually had a decisive significance for measuring time is clear from its name.

Between the eight month and the first month of the new year there was a period of a half moon. This period was called 'Zwischen den Jahren' (between the years), 'die Zwölften' (the twelve), 'Unternächte' (under nights) and 'Rauhnächte'. In English this time is usually called Yule and Twelfth night. Iceland remembers a 13th Night. The Yule period started with a celebration. On the islands north of the Netherlands this celebration is called '[Ouwe Sunderklaas](#)' and it is celebrated at December 12. In the main land of the Netherlands, the celebration is at December 5 and is called '[Sinterklaas](#)'. On Iceland Yule starts with the appearance of the first [Yule-lad](#) also at December 12. In Austria '[Krampus](#)' comes at December 5.

The Christians introduced a calendar with fixed dates. So Sunderklaas is celebrated at December 12 and on Iceland the first Yule lad appears at December 12. Before the Christian calendar the time of Yule was more flexible. It lasted from 'Sunderklaas' to 'Twelfth night'.

Indications of this calculation of time have been found in [the solar car from Trundholm \(Denmark\)](#). There are four concentric circles on a sun shield. The three outer circles contain 8, 16 and 27 circles. The inner circle with the second circle with 8 circles together form the year wheel. In the middle the time between the years, surrounded by 8 circles for the 8 months. But this is also an interpretation.



Sun chariot of Trundholm, source Andrén, Behind Heathendom.

The first wheels of the car have eight spokes, the other wheels have four spokes. The eight spoked wheels represent the sun, the four spoked wheels represent the moon.

Nine-year festivals

According to Adam of Bremen there was a sacrificial feast in Uppsala in Sweden every nine years. See: [The temple at old Uppsala](#) For Denmark, Thietmar of Merseburg mentions a similar [festival in Lejre](#). We have no reliable account of what really happened at these festivals. The descriptions are from biased Christian writers, who had their data from 'hear-say'.

When you shorten one month in a certain year, you should do that in a gathering with all the people of your culture. It seems likely, that that was one of the purposes of these nine-year festivals. But this is not more than an educated guess. We have no confirmation about this from any written source.

Nine celebrations per year:

There are indications, that the Germanic peoples had nine celebrations per year. Eight celebrations around the start of each month and a ninth celebration for the half moon 'Between the years', the Yule time. I write 'around the start of each month' and not 'at the start of each month'. I assume, that most of these celebrations were timed by the moon. But the Midsummer celebration was probably at the longest day, regardless of the moon. These nine celebrations were:

1. Twelfth Day, the start of the New year. People drank three drinking horns or cups for three 'gods'. In Christian times these pagan deities were replaced with 'the three kings' that visited Jesus in his crib.
2. Car Naval, the celebration of [Nerthus](#). A car was pulled around the fields by unmarried women, while unmarried men cracked whips to fire them on.
3. [Ostara](#), eastern. Once in every nine years this was celebrated with a large feast in Uppsala, Lejre and perhaps also at other places. Every year this was celebrated by the local communities at home.
4. [Walpurgis](#) night, devoted to Freya, followed with dancing around the may-pole. Walpurgis probably is derived from Frau Valburg, which is a name of Freya as 'Bury of fallen women'.
5. Midsummer, celebrated with balefires like [Balder's Balar](#).
6. Late-Summer feast. A small celebration. People were too busy with the harvest, a large festival was not practical.
7. Harvest feast. A small celebration. People were too busy with the harvest, a large festival was not practical.

8. Halloween or the [Wild Hunt](#). It is often stated, that this festival was Celtic. I assume that it was Celtic and Germanic. (The distinction between the two seems artificial to me.) The name could be from the same source as the Dutch 'Harlekijn' (Har the king) and Mesnie Hellequin.
9. Yule, 'Between the years'. This was a very important period for the tribal people. With 'Sunderklaas' the young boys that had gotten into puberty were put in leather sacks and taken away for initiation. They were hung in a sacred tree. The boy died in the sack and a man was born. After this initiation the young man became a member of the 'Yule Lads' (Jólasveinar).

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